

# *Cattle on the Range: History vs. Today*

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**Grade:** 4

**Duration:** 45 minutes

**Description:** The purpose of this lesson is to make students aware of the importance of cattle, in the past as well as the present.

**Goals:** Students will gain an understanding of the influences of cattle in the past through to today.

**Objectives:** The students will write a comparison chart between the uses of cattle today vs. the past

## **Materials:**

1. Picture of a cattle ranch
2. Picture of the open range.

## **Procedure:**

1. Review the design of the grass harvester or discuss how the cow is important to the land. Ex. Harvests, reseeds, tills.

2. Discuss the 1st cattle drives in a very basic way.

- a. Who brought the cattle north first? Texans
- b. Why did they drive the cattle North? For free grass
- c. What kind of cattle did they bring? Longhorns

3. Discuss Big Ranches/Cattle Barons: Grant-Kohrs Ranch

- i. Grant traded healthy cattle for sick cattle that came up the Oregon Trail.
- ii. They ran their cattle over open range. NO FENCES
- iii. They did no haying until after the harsh winter of 1886-87 which caused many smaller ranchers to lose their cattle.
- iv. This in turn began the idea of haying so cattle can be fed during the winter months.

4. Compare and Contrast the Open Range to the introduction of Fences.

a. Open Range:

1. Cowboys continuously move cattle.
2. Thousands of cattle were placed on the ranges. This can cause havoc on the ranges, by overgrazing.
3. Many owners' cattle are together.
4. Branding was a way of identification of cattle.
5. Spring round ups to brand new calves

b. Fencing:

1. Cattle are rotated from field to field. Can cause problems if left in one place too long. Overgrazing
2. Cattle drives could no longer take place.

3. Purebreds are introduced.

4. Water rights is a issue

5. Irrigation

6. Haying

5. Why do we have cattle anyway?

a. Food source for human population

b. Range management.

**Assessment:** Student must be able to identify differences between closed and open range.